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The the concept of Mind in Yogavasishtha

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Yogavasistha, popularly known as the Maharamayana, Arsha-Ramayana, Jnana-Vasishtha, Vasitha-Ramayana and simply as Yoga Vasistha, is an extensive philosophical poem containing about 32,000 verses. Much larger in size than the philosophical work Gita or great epic Ramayana, it is a unique and voluminous work in Sanskrit. It may be quite befittingly called a brief encyclopaedia of moral teachings and philosophical tenets and doctrines for seeker of self-knowledge and liberation

The Yogavasishtha philosophy mainly continues like a conversation between Guru Vasishtha and disciple Ramachandra. Here in this major work the hero is Rama and the preceptor is Vasishtha maharshi. When Ramachandra was still a small boy starts getting questions regarding the life and life behind the life. Ramachandra was so curious about the secret behind the life and death and the drama in between these two states. Ramachandra always used to begins to reflect on the nature of things and finds them unsatisfactory, irrational, transitory and illusionary. He was overpowered by pessimism even while he was still a small boy. King Dasaratha knowing the mental condition of his son took him to teacher Vasishtha. Ramachandra expressed his thoughts and feelings before his Guru that what use is there of our living here when we are all born to die? Life is momentary and fastly passes away. It is a doll in the hands of death. Our mind is so restless that it never finds lasting repose in anything. Our desires are insatiate and always jump from one object to another. The body is an abode of disease and suffering. Childhood is beset with want of strength and wisdom. Youth, in itself evanescent, makes our minds polluted. In youth we become slaves to the beauty of women, which appears charming only for a short while, but soon turns out destructive of health and happiness. There is none whom old age does not overcome. Our existence is a mere mockery. Our enjoyments are the source of our own pain, and our desires and ambitions allure us to our ruin.

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Our own senses are our enemy. The splendor of all objects is ephemeral. Thus there is nothing in life in which a sensible man can find solace. "I, therefore, want to know if there is any state of existence attainable, which is above the sufferings and sorrows of life".

Having heard all this, Vasishtha began by telling Ramachandra that true and lasting happiness which every man seeks for does not reside in the things of the earth. The cause of our sorrow is only the attachment to worldly life. Attachment towards the worldliness is more dangerous. There is no distress which a worldly person does not suffer. Vasishtha said like this :-

वसिष्ठ उवाच विषमो ह्यतितरां संसाररागो भोगीव दशति, असिरिव छिनत्ति, कुन्त इव वेधयति, रज्जुरिवावेशयति, पावक इव दहति, रात्रिरिवान्धयति, अशङ्कितपरिपतितपुरुषान्पाषाण इव विवशीकरोति, हरति प्रज्ञां, नाशयति स्थितिं, पातयति मोहान्धकूपे, तृष्णा जर्जरीकरोति, न तदस्ति किञ्चिद्दुःखं संसारी यन्न प्राप्नोति॥ (योगवासिष्ठः 2-12-14)

There are four preliminary requirements which a man desirous of knowing the Self should have in order that he may easily succeed in his efforts, namely, Contentment, Peace of Mind, Association with the Wise and Rational Investigation. Of these, the last is the most important.

As minds we have got a tremendous power at our command. Whatever the mind thinks of and believes intensely comes to happen. The mind is the seed of the world and the nave of the wheel of life. Creation and dissolution are the rising and setting of its activities. Every individual mind is the master of its destiny and the maker of its body and circumstances. There is no other agency but our own mind that gives us our desired objects. The mind creates the body from its own imagination, and can change the form of

the body by its own intense and repeated imagination.

मनो हि जगतां कर्तुं मनो हि पुरुषः स्मृतः।¹
स्वरूपं सर्वकृत्त्वं च शक्तत्वं मनसो मुनो ॥²
मनो यदनुसन्धत्ते तदेवाप्नोति तत्क्षणात्।³
यथैतद्भावयेत्स्वान्तं तथैव भवति क्षणात्॥⁴
प्रतिभासमुपायाति यद्यदस्य हि चेतसः।
तत्तत्प्रकटतामेति स्थैर्यं सफलतामपि॥⁵
तत्स्वयं स्वैरमेवाशु सङ्कल्पयति देहकम्।
तेनेयमिन्द्रियजालश्रीर्विततेन वितन्यते॥⁶
मनसेदं शरीरं हि वासनार्थं प्रकल्पितम्।
कृमिकोशप्रकारेण स्वात्मकोश इव स्वयम्॥⁷

It can cure all the physical ailments of the body its harmonious and healthy thoughts because all physical disorders have their origin in mental disorders according to Vasishtha. It is in the power of everyone to continue well and young as long as one will to do so. For whatever the mind determines to experience, no other agency can withstand. Bondage and freedom are also the states of mind and are determined by it. Bondage or suffering is due to our wrong belief that we are finite beings. Freedom from ignorance and wrong beliefs and the conviction of our being one with the Absolute Reality constitute Liberation. The kingdom of Heaven and the Home of Happiness are within us. The moment we attain the peace of mind, the entire universe is changed for us.

न मनोनिश्चयकृतं कश्चिद्बोधयितुं क्षमः।⁸
या यथैव प्रवृत्ता चित्सा तथैव प्रतिष्ठिता ॥⁹
यो बद्धपदतां योतो जन्तोर्मनसि निश्चयः।
स तेनैव विना ब्रह्मन्नान्येन विनिवार्यते॥¹⁰
बहुकालं यदभ्यस्तं मनसा दृढनिश्चयम्।
शापेनापि न तस्यास्ति क्षयो नष्टेऽपि देहके॥¹¹
वीरं मनो भेदयितुं मनागपि न शक्यते।
का नाम ता महाराज कीदृश्यः कस्य शक्तयः॥¹²
याभिर्मनांसि भिद्यन्ते दृष्टनिश्चयवन्त्यपि॥¹³

यथा संवित्त्था चित्तं सा तथावस्थितं गता।
परमेण प्रयत्नेन नीयतेऽन्यदशां पुनः॥¹⁴
चित्तायत्तमिदं सर्वं जगत्स्थिरचरात्मकम्।
चित्ताधीनवतो राम बन्धमोक्षावपि स्फुटम्॥¹⁵

The above mentioned essence of the philosophy was taught by Vasishtha to Rama in Yogavasishtha is very useful to the present society which is with full of ego, diseases, unsteadiness , miseries, lack of moralities, full of impurities,etc.,Surely the study of Yogavasishtha is solace to the present society to lead healthy, happy, peaceful and holistic life.

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